

Speech by Bruno Rodríguez Parilla, Cuban Minister of Foreign Affairs, at the Haiti Donors Meeting

“Generosity and Political Will is Needed”

Mr. President,

The international community has a tremendous debt with Haiti where, after three centuries of colonialism, the first social revolution on the American continent took place, an act of boldness that the colonial powers punished with close to 200 years of military dictatorships and plunder. Its noble and hardworking people are now the poorest in the Western hemisphere.

We all have the moral obligation to contribute additional financial resources and greater cooperation to Haiti, not only for its reconstruction but, in particular, for its development.

In order to have an idea of the magnitude of the human tragedy in Haiti, suffice it to note that the death of 230,000 people in its small and high-density population, is equivalent to the death of more than 30 million people in a country such as China, whose population reaches a total of 1.3 billion inhabitants; an unimaginable tragedy.

In the wake of this devastating earthquake that shook the conscience of humanity, we trust that the numerous promises heard will be converted into action, that Haiti’s independence and sovereignty will be respected and ennobled, that the government of President René Préval and Prime Minister Jean Max Bellerive will be facilitated to exercise all its faculties, and that it will be able to benefit, not the whites and foreign companies, but the Haitian people, especially the



Cuban and Cuban-trained doctors staff the OFATMA Social Security Hospital in Port-au-Prince.

poorest.

Generosity and political will is needed. Also needed is the unity of that country instead of its division into market plots and dubious charitable projects.

The program for the reconstruction and strengthening of the Haitian national healthcare system, drawn up by the Haitian government and Cuban governments, with the cooperation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and other countries and humanitarian organizations, will guarantee wide health coverage for the population, in particular the low-income sector.

That program is based on 101 primary healthcare centers which are being created, at which an estimated 2.8 million patients will be treated, 1.3 million emergency operations performed, 168,000 babies delivered, and 3 million vaccinations administered every year.

These health centers will be supported by the services of 30 community reference hospitals distributed throughout the country and equipped with cutting-edge technology for secondary attention, which can treat 2.154

million people per year, perform 54,000 operations – 1 million of these emergency surgery –, 276,000 electro-cardiograms, 144,000 diagnostic ultrasounds, 43,000 endoscopies, 181,000 X-Rays, 107,000 dental examinations, and 487,000 laboratory tests.

Given the extraordinary number of poly-traumatized patients, 30 rehabilitation rooms are likewise being equipped which, within 12 months, will provide services for 520,000 patients

and 2.4 million therapeutic treatments.

There will also be three electromedical centers, a prosthesis laboratory and an integral hygiene and epidemiology program.

Also planned is a Haitian National Specialties Hospital at tertiary level, involving co-operation from other countries, directed by 80 high-level Cuban specialists responsible for services and clinical departments, research and teaching, and Haitian professionals who will be trained at the institution and progressively replace the Cuban medical professors.

The cost of the already mentioned services will amount to \$690.5 million over 10 years, a total that includes the medical services provided, calculated at 50% of international prices; the sustainability of these services and the personnel providing them; and the training of a further 312 Haitian doctors in Cuba.

As can be deduced, the approximate cost is \$170 million per year for a country of approximately 9.33 million inhabitants.

It is possible to do this. Our practical experience confirms it. In fact, this program is already underway and, post-quake, 23 of these primary care health centers, 15 community reference hospitals and 21 rehabilitation rooms are up and running.

From almost immediately after the earthquake, Cuban specialists have been dedicating their attention to the population affected. To date they have seen 260,000 patients, performed more than 7,000 operations, delivered close to 1,400 babies, and administered close to 100,000 vaccinations. More than 50,000 patients have undergone rehabilitation therapy and more than 75,000 children have received psychosocial therapy, in the presence of some of Cuba’s most eminent professionals.

A total of 783 Cuban and 481 Haitian doctors, plus 278 health professionals from 28 countries – all of them graduated in Cuba – are working on this program.

Last Saturday [March 27], as part of the program outlined, a memorandum of understanding for the strengthening of the healthcare and public services system and epidemiological prevention was signed in Port-au-Prince, thanks to the will of the Haitian government and a significant contribution from President Lula and Brazil, which will be decisive for the planned healthcare program.

continued on the back page...

Nothing Has Changed:

OCCUPATION IS THE CAUSE OF CRISIS IN IRAQ

The change in focus is intentional. By shifting from Iraq to Afghanistan, major media outlets like CNN, CBC and BBC that are mouthpieces for the US, Canada and UK governments are hoping to draw our attention away from Iraq, giving the impression that things are now more or less stable and under control. But beyond the narrow view afforded by the lens of the major media, what is life like for Iraqi people?

Is Iraq an Issue?

“Operation Iraqi Freedom” was the promising name given the US-led mission in Iraq when bombs first started pounding the country in 2003. Iraqis, the invaders claimed, would soon be liberated from the dictator Saddam Hussein and could look forward to a better life brought to them by US and UK forces.

Fast-forward to 2010. The war has cost nearly 1.5 million Iraqi lives, plus the lives of more than 4600 foreign troops. 4.5 million people are now refugees inside or outside Iraq (Iraq Displacement and Statistics Assessment 2007). In financial terms, more than \$3 trillion has been spent on the war by the US alone. This is the heavy price of “freedom” in

Iraq. But now that all these dollars and lives have been spent, is the war at least over? Can Iraqis now be considered free? Both the statistics and the bombed-out shells of buildings shout a resounding “no”.



Protest against the occupation in Najaf, Iraq. April 9, 2010.

Sahar Kadum, a resident of Kut, Iraq, expressed the view of many Iraqis in a November 20, 2009 interview with the New York Times. “Where is the reconstruction?” he asked. “The city is sleeping on hills of garbage.”

The horrifying effects of depleted uranium and other chemical weapons have so far been documented primarily in southern Iraq.

However, the contamination is expected to spread through Iraq’s soil and waterways, affecting the entire population. But these diseases are not a mere side effect of the war – they are a lasting legacy. Depleted uranium remains radioactive, and therefore a threat to human life, for 4.5 billion years. The rich, fertile land of Iraq which was once known as ‘the cradle of humanity’ is now a death sentence for humanity.

In September 2009, Fallujah General Hospital had 170 new born babies, 24% of whom were dead within the first seven days, a staggering 75% of the dead babies were classified as deformed. On February 1st, 2010, the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights announced that it will file a lawsuit against Britain

and the US over the use of depleted uranium. Whatever the outcome of the case is, one thing is sure: it cannot even begin to make up for the crimes against humanity that have been committed, and continue to be committed, in Iraq.

The New Era of War and

continued on the back page...

3rd International Che Guevara Conference

CUBA & REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONALISM

June 26-27, 2010
Vancouver
Canada

www.vancubasolidarity.com

FOR UNITED ACTION AGAINST WAR AND OCCUPATION!

Canadian Anti-war Activists Join Anti-war Actions in U.S.

2009 ended with the United Nations announcement that it had been the deadliest year for Afghan civilians over the eight years of US/Canada/NATO war and occupation.

On December 1, 2009 US President Obama announced his decision to deploy at least 30,000 more US troops to Afghanistan. Antiwar protests were organized across the United States in response to this announcement, demanding: NO to the escalation of troops to Afghanistan, and an end to the war



and occupation of Afghanistan. One of these demonstrations was on December 5, in Seattle, organized by ANSWER Seattle (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism); activists from Vancouver based antiwar coalition Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) travelled across the border to participate. In Canada, the prime task of antiwar activity is to oppose the war which is the focus of the government of Canada's imperialist ambitions - Afghanistan. With the US government's reinforced focus on Afghanistan, The US and Canada antiwar movements now have even more of a common goal. As this new era of war and occupation deepens, so must the cooperation and unity of antiwar activity on both the US and Canada sides of the border.

With just a few days notice, over 150 peace loving people marched together through Seattle, raising slogans and chants for US out of Afghanistan. The march concluded with

a rally near Pike Place Market, where Jane Cutter, coordinator of ANSWER Seattle, invited up representatives of the many antiwar and social justice groups to voice their opposition to war. Members of Veterans for Peace and Iraq Veterans Against the War spoke out from the critical perspective of antiwar soldiers who have seen the brutality of this war machine first hand. Other speakers included members of CodePink Women for Peace and the World Can't Wait, as well as MAWO co-chair Janine Solanki who gave messages of cross-border solidarity and unity against war.

The next day, following the December 5, Seattle rally, there was another important action that Vancouver activists joined. GI Voice and Veterans for Peace organized a protest outside of the Fort Lewis Military Base, the largest military base on the West Coast, against the war in Iraq and Afghanistan and in support of GI war resisters. Two war resisters were being held in the Fort Lewis prison, Travis Bishop- who refused to deploy to Afghanistan, and Leo Church- who went absent without leave (AWOL) because the army refused to let him leave to take care of his homeless wife and children. Protesters stood on a bridge overlooking the busy I-5 highway, getting honks and waves of support from travellers.

During this important weekend of protest, antiwar activists joined together not only to protest the US/Canada/NATO occupation of Afghanistan, but also in the effort to build a united and effective international movement to end this increasing new era of war and occupation.

“Occupation is the cause of crisis in Iraq”
continued from front

Occupation

Make no mistake: the crisis in Iraq is not over. Iraq is not secure and will not be secure after the last election in March. The occupation is not ending. In a November 2009 “Iraq Security Trends” report from US-based think-tank the Center for Strategic and International Studies, it was stated that “The current levels of violence remain too high for the US to simply carry out a “responsible withdrawal,” and go to a “normal embassy” in 2012. The US will need to create strong military and State Department advisory teams to help Iraq's armed forces, police forces, and security forces continue to improve. It will need to continue to provide aid to develop Iraqi forces, and make significant transfers of the military equipment now in Iraq. It will need to sustain aid in improving Iraq's rule of law, and in improving the quality and sustainability of Iraqi forces at least through 2014 – and probably for years in the future.”

Troops Out Now!

There is no ‘exit strategy’ for Iraq. In fact, the plan for Iraq is to “stabilize” the country in US interests for a long-term US military presence in the region. The last eight years of occupation have brought nothing but horror and destruction to the Iraqi people – anyone who cares about human lives and human dignity must shudder to think what an occupation long into the foreseeable future will bring.

It is our responsibility as human beings to demand an immediate withdrawal of all foreign forces from Iraq. This has been the demand of the Iraqi people for seven years now, and now more than ever is the time for us to echo it in Canada, the US and around the world.

US Out of Iraq!

Self-Determination for Iraq!

Troops Home Now!

“Generosity and Political Will is Needed”
continued from front

During the 11 years of work prior to the earthquake, the Cuban medical brigade, which has a presence in 127 of the 137 Haitian communes, saved 223,442 lives, treated 14 million people, performed 225,000 operations and delivered 109,000 babies. Via the Operation Miracle program, 46,000 Haitians have had their sight restored or improved. During the same period, 165,000 Haitians have become literate in Creole.

If we evaluate the medical services provided in these 11 years and the training of medical personnel in Cuba, it would represent \$400 million throughout the period.

The medical program that we are proposing, in its entirety, will benefit 75% of the poorest population of the country at a minimum expense.

We invite all governments, without exception, to contribute to this noble effort. For that reason, we attribute particular importance to this conference, and aspire to its success.

Thank you very much.

New York, 31 March, 2010

Translated by Granma International



Anti-war protest in Los Angeles on the 6th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. March 20, 2010.

Why the Antiwar Movement Must Include the Case of the Cuban 5 as an Important Campaign

These five men have been locked up in U.S. prison for over 11 years. The Cuban Five are Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, Ramón Labañino Salazar, Rene González Schwerert, Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez and Fernando González Lloret. They are sons, husbands, brothers, poets, pilots, college graduates and artists. Three of the Cuban Five were born in Cuba and two were born in the United States. Also three of them fought in Angola, during the war against apartheid.

They are currently serving long prison sentences in the United States, while admitted anti-Cuban terrorist Luis Posada Carriles walks free under US government protection.

The Five Cuban Heroes are part of the U.S. government's 50 year war against Cuba which aims to overthrow the country's revolutionary government. All together since the Cuban revolution of 1959, terrorist attacks have killed 3,478 innocent people. These terrorists are in the USA and have enjoyed the protection and direct or indirect support of the United States government. Some of these terrorists, including Luis Posada Carriles, were responsible for planning a bombing of a Cuban airliner in 1976 which killed 73 people. Many were also active in the CIA.

In the mid 1990's, Cuba sent five unarmed, peaceful men to Miami with the aim of infiltrating and investigating these terrorist groups. The information they collected was given to the US government in hopes they would intervene to stop the terror against Cuba.

In September 1998, after the United States government had received the findings of the five Cuban men, they were immediately arrested by the US government and put in solitary confinement for over 17 months without trial. After three years of waiting, they were finally granted a trial in 2001.

The trial was held in Miami, which was protested by the five and their lawyers due to the city's known hostility towards Cuba. It was clear from beginning that five accused Cubans could not have a fair trial in Miami. The Miami court found all of the false charges against the Cuban 5 to be true. The charges handed down to the five ranged from “conspiracy to commit espionage” to “conspiracy to commit murder”, despite the prosecution admitting they did not have concrete evidence for these charges. The Cuban Five were given sentences ranging from 15 years to over two life sentences.

MAWO believes that the case of the Five Cuban Heroes is one that matters to the anti-war movement and we must

campaign for their freedom as campaign against war and occupation. The argument for the antiwar movement taking up the case of the five Cuban Heroes simply lies in the roots and cause of this new area of war and occupation. The mission of the Cuban 5 concretely was to infiltrate Miami Cuban terrorist groups and expose them to the Cuban government and the government of the United States. It was categorically an anti-terrorism operation. The US and other imperialist countries started the new era of war and occupation after the tragedy of September 11, 2001 with a campaign claiming to target terrorism. The US and its allies exposed with their war and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq that they are the ones truly using terror against oppressed nations. But the depths of their hypocrisy has been demonstrated by jailing the five Cuban anti-terrorist heroes in jail for 11 years and letting the real terrorists, Cuban or non-Cuban, freely live and conduct terrorism from and within United States. So defending the Five Cuban heroes is not only a campaign to free them but also exposes the true satanic nature of imperialist countries. As well, the United States has been at war with Cuba for almost 50 years, imposing a complete criminal blockade as well as sabotaging the normal daily life of Cuban people.

In our opinion, it should not be difficult to recognize that the unjust imprisonment of the Five Cuban heroes is part of an ongoing war and occupation against Cuba (Guantanamo base is part of Cuban territory that has been occupied by US government for more than 100 years) and provocation against a country that is only 90 miles from US. The only crime of Cuba has been to uphold dignity for all human beings by defending their inalienable right to self-determination and determine their way of life. It is the time for the antiwar movement to consider this important campaign a campaign of our own.



Monthly Picket Action

THURSDAY APRIL 15
Canadian Forces Recruitment Centre
620 Royal Ave at 6th St.
New Westminster
MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION [MAWO]
WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG

FREE PUBLIC FORUM

Haiti
Three Months After the Earthquake:
Where it is and Where is it Going?
6:30pm
Joes Cafe
Large North Hall
1150 Commercial Drive
Wednesday April 21
Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO)
www.mawovancouver.org

Get involved

Meetings
Wednesdays - 6:30PM
For location, please visit our website:
mawovancouver.org
e. info@mawovancouver.org
t. 604-322-1764
f. 604-322-1763